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By

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A THESIS

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The undersigned certify that they have read, and recommend to the Faculty of Graduate Studies and Research, for acceptance, a thesis entitled:

GOOD DESIGN POOR TASTE

Submitted by Bryan Humphrey in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Master of Design.

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GOOD DESIGN, POOR TASTE.

BRYAN HUMPHREY

MDES INDUSTRIAL DESIGN



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PG. 1 **CURRICULUM VITAE**

PG. 3 **DESIGN ABSTRACT**

PG. 4 **BIBLIOGRAPHY**

PG. 5 **EGG** pendant lamp

PG. 6 **GAY VS. EVIL** coffee table

PG. 7 **FEATHERS-ON-BIRD** table lamp

PG. 8 **COW-ON-COW** rug

PG. 9 **AFTER THE WAR, GRANDPA GOT A NEW PAIR OF LEGS** rocker

PG. 10 **I USED TO PLAY A LOT OF D & D** console

PG. 11 **THE DANGERS ASSOCIATED WITH THE CONSUMPTION OF FAST-FOOD** toilet seats

PG. 12 **2 FISH** candelabra

PG. 13 **HAVE A HAPPY DAY** vase

PG. 14 **SOLD** wall hanging

Conceive, Create, Capture. This is the most concise articulation of my creative process, from genesis to completion, across all fields of self-expression. My interest of artistic intent in its infancy, found roots in both the fashion and beauty industry. Photography, quickly followed, as I embraced technologies which would soon self-reveal my desire to design. From all of these experiences in addition to strong architectural influences, conception has become a perpetual state. My creationary tendencies towards object related design solutions acquire conception in a variety of forms and media.

My interest in pre-modernist ornamental applications partnered with a desire to allow my design to transcend mere function to provide commentary through form, culminated in **Good Design, Poor Taste**, exhibited at 29ARMSTRONG on August 2008. This exhibition marked my first solo show and represented the major component of my MDes (Industrial Design) from the University of Alberta. This body of work is a visual journey through the creation of objects that speaks on taste not only in its aesthetic understandings but in its social and moral contexts as well.

Through the extrapolation and modification of traditional ornamental styles applied to what are generally considered 'modern' surfaces, I sought out a reconciliation of ornament. Visually, the creation of a 'style-clash' became almost too obvious of a solution by which this would occur. Through the juxtaposition of harshly extruded traditional ornamental interpretations with minimal modern surfaces, I created objects which question the relevance of post-modern aesthetic taste. Taste as a device of judgement, crosses all fields of assessment. With the understanding that design has become a vehicle of social commentary in recent years, I gained interest in how 'Kitsch' might be added to my aesthetic equation in order to discuss other realms of taste. The admittedly elitist function of this device coupled with the understanding of 'good design' being design in which appropriate function is achieved, a newly evolved application of referential ornamentation arose. Traditionally with ornamental applications, abstractions are drawn from environmental influences as a reference of form alone. By creating objects that reference themselves in form while providing a parody to function, the achievement of social dialogue became obtainable.

Described by many as objects that are as much art as design, my work has become an excellent playing field by which all matters of taste can be discussed through their applications in design. This cross-section of taste with its multi-layered understandings delves into traditional design vernaculars that include both materials and applications. I parody these with extreme, sometimes nonsensical pairings which allow the objects both function and folly. It is in this whimsy that I intend viewers to draw reactions to all extremes. Love and hate, admiration and disgust, confusion and understanding. All are intended; all are delivered.

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resin-coated rapid prototype with photo-luminescent film, 2008



candy-floss chromed laser-cut steel with marble top, 2008



lacquered MDF base with feather shade, 2007



screened cow hide, 2008



red-chromed steel base with painted salvaged Arts & Crafts oak components, 2008



electroplated laser-cut steel, 2008



CNC-cut with gold-leaf inlay on prefabricated oak veneered MDF, 2008



waxed CNC-cut curly maple with lacquered details, 2007



painted resin-coated rapid prototype model, 2007



paint on found object, 2008

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